

BellSouth has filed a petition with you, asking the FCC to stop regulating broadband service. If this petition is granted, this would mean that the large phone companies would no longer be subject to regulatory review of their broadband pricing to independent ISPs like Sonic.net. This could badly damage independent ISPs. And as a result, this would undoubtedly raise our prices. The phone companies could, in the long run, refuse to provide the necessary connections for Sonic's DSL service. BellSouth's claim is that because their own affiliated ISP service already controls a huge majority of the market, squashing the rest of the competition isn't likely to impact the market much.

However, customers and Sonic.net as an ISP are the folks who might get squashed. I greatly value Sonic's excellent, personalized customer service. I value obtaining Internet service from an independent ISP such as Sonic.net.

Verizon and Qwest have followed up and filed similar requests, and we could expect SBC to follow suit. I am concerned that if they were not required to provide access to all ISPs, independent ISPs and Sonic.net and we customers could suffer badly.

I am writing to tell the FCC that the companies which built the Internet itself should not be wiped away and replaced by the large telephone monopolies.